

FFORDD GWYNEDD

June 2015



1. What is Ffordd Gwynedd?

Ffordd Gwynedd is the name given to the “way” we in Gwynedd Council will ensure that we place the people of Gwynedd central to everything we do.

It is neither a process nor a theory, rather a collection of working arrangements, behaviours and a culture which, together, allow us to be confident that we always place the people of Gwynedd central to everything we do.

2. Why is this strategy needed?

As a body which exists to serve the people of Gwynedd, our culture and working arrangements should ensure that those people are at the heart of everything we do.

A large number of the Council's staff would consider that we already do this. However, there is considerable evidence that suggests that this is not always the case.

However, very often this is not the fault of the staff.

The majority of the Council staff work hard to try to achieve things that are of benefit to the people of Gwynedd. However, things happen in their day to day work which prevent them from realising this desire – things which derive from working procedures and arrangements developed over many years which have been established for various reasons.

The Council's culture has also led us think at time that we know better and not to consider what the real needs of our residents are.

If we are going to ask the staff to really place the people of Gwynedd central to everything we do, we must ensure that we have the right conditions within the Council to allow this to happen.

This means creating a culture which is consistent with this objective and which tirelessly eliminates those barriers which prevent our workforce from doing this.

It must be stressed that placing the people of Gwynedd central to everything we do is not the same as saying that we will satisfy everyone's wishes. The Council must work within significant financial constraints and we cannot meet everyone's expectations.

However, within the resources we have, we should ensure that every penny is spent to maximise the value created for the people of Gwynedd and those things that are important to them. The starting point of all of this is to consider everything through the eyes of the people of Gwynedd rather than through the eyes of the establishment and its staff.

PUTTING THE PEOPLE OF GWYNEDD AT THE CENTRE OF EVERYTHING WE DO

FFORDD
GWYNEDD

In the current financial climate, which is likely to last for an extended period, Local Government will receive much less money and this means that, if we are going to be able to continue to ensure that the most needy are looked after, we will also have to look for other methods of achieving the requirements of the people of Gwynedd.

The people of Gwynedd must also face the fact that if we are to continue to deliver those services which are of the highest priority to them, then they must also be willing to accept different methods of meeting their needs – maybe even by asking some cohorts to meet their own needs with different support from the Council or from other organisations.

Many will object to these changes (change is never popular) but it is an essential element of placing the people of Gwynedd central ensuring that the value gained from every pound spent delivers the greatest possible benefits.

3. What needs to be in place in order to realise the vision?

All of this starts by understanding the basic business model that the Council should be working to.

This business model can be summarised as follows -



It starts by defining what requirements any service team is providing for the people of Gwynedd (namely, defining the "purpose" of the team); defining what is important to the people of Gwynedd in meeting that need; and then establishing which measures indicate how good they are at achieving that purpose.

Teams should then be continually aiming to find ways of improving their performance on those measures.

Due to the significant financial constraints we are facing, service teams will also have to consider whether there are ways of preventing those needs from arising in the first place (perhaps by investing earlier and in preventative services) in order to reduce the "needs" we are required to provide for and in doing so ensuring that the resources we have can serve more people.

When the time comes to prioritise the requirements to be met, this will be a matter for the Council's elected members.

However, an understanding of the business model shown above and attempting to implement it in itself will not be adequate. Ensuring that we place the people of Gwynedd central to everything we do means having a culture and working arrangements within the Council which reiterate our ability to realise that wish.



4. Ensuring appropriate working arrangements and culture

A change in culture will not happen overnight and, reaching the end of the journey will undoubtedly take time. What is important is that we start on that journey and assess from time to time whether we are on the right track and how far we have travelled.

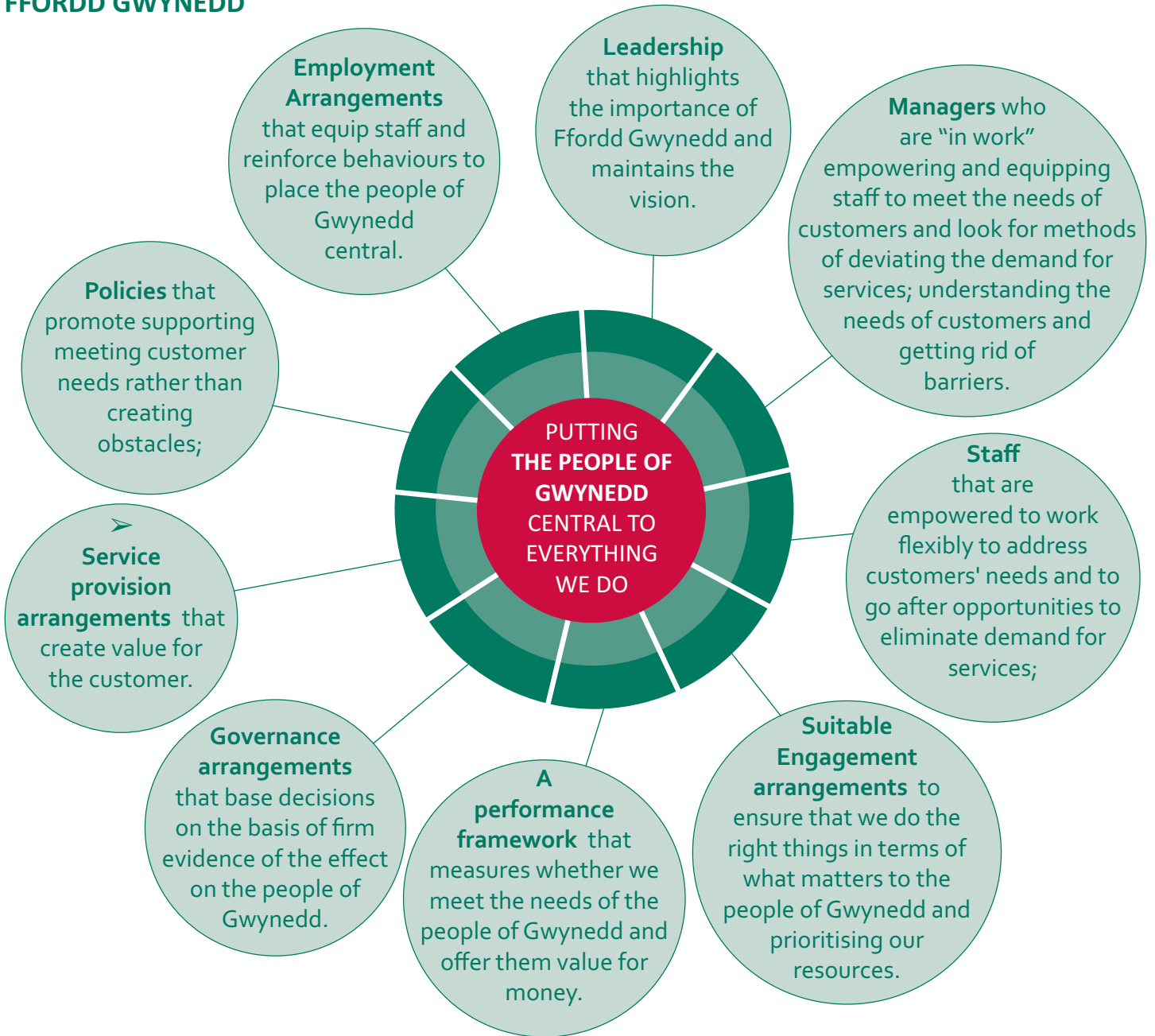
Several discussion sessions have been held with members, managers and staff to assess what the weaknesses are perceived in responding to the needs of our residents.

In addition, an assessment was undertaken of the existing governance arrangements (whilst preparing for the Annual Governance Statement).

We also experimented with the Systems Thinking concept as a method of ensuring that we focus on genuinely meeting needs.

These experiences, along with the assessments undertaken, led to the conclusion that the following need to be in place, if we are to succeed in having an appropriate culture in order to realise our ambition.

We must have -



5. How will we achieve all of this?

Past experience has shown that it is not through training sessions and lecturing staff that we will ensure that these elements fall into place.

We must have a development framework which ensures that there is an opportunity for services to reflect on what they are doing and to ask the fundamental question "Are we placing the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything?"

This framework must equip people with the necessary skills to be able to reflect on that, whilst also giving appropriate support and assistance to implement any

necessary changes and offer continuous challenge throughout the process to ensure that it happens.

Project No. 1 will do this. This is the cornerstone which will attempt to root the mind-set and relevant behaviours within every service unit in the Council.

It is an enormous task as we are trying to transform decades of practices but it is only through this method that we will be able to attempt to ensure that the necessary behaviour change is rooted together with enabling the workforce.

In itself, it will not be enough, however, as other elements as noted above must pull in the same direction if we are to succeed.

There is also a possibility that we have missed something and we must be aware of this as we go on the journey and change the strategy as and when required.

There is one certainty; we must be uncompromising about the implementation of this strategy, or it will fail. It is not enough to say that we will be implementing it, our behaviours must support that.



6. Work Programme

The following notes the projects we will be undertaking in order to ensure that we create an appropriate culture within the Council and notes which element of the circle above they will address.

Managers who are in work empowering staff to meet the needs of customers and look for methods of deviating the demand for services; understanding the needs of customers and getting rid of barriers.

Staff that are empowered to work flexibly to address customers' needs and to pursue opportunities to eliminate demand for services.

Project 1 - Implementing Ffordd Gwynedd

The “Implementing Ffordd Gwynedd” project will have two work streams

The first will be to immerse all Council managers in the basic principles of Ffordd Gwynedd to ensure that they have an understanding of the relevant concepts and what they can do to disseminate the mind-set in their units. However, raising awareness in itself will not lead to success.

The second work stream will involve implementing a programme which will equip service teams to be able to reflect on their existing working arrangements; challenge whether they are placing the people of Gwynedd centrally, and consider whether there is room for improvement; ensuring that every service has the opportunity to implement the programme.

It is anticipated that this will involve a series of joint learning sessions at work which will equip managers and staff to:-

- Look at the service provided through the eyes of the citizen every time.
- Agree together how best to go about things in order to provide what is important to our people.
- Challenge working methods which do not help to deliver for our people.
- Be willing to experiment (with clear success measures) in order to improve services.
- Take advantage of the opportunities provided to suggest how services can be improved.
- Ensure a continuous dialogue between managers and staff to see how managers can help staff to do their work better and take advantage of staff knowledge to improve services.
- Ensure that the Unit’s performance ownership is in everyone's hands (not just the managers).
- Ensure that performance information is used to improve the service.

- Create a culture of continuous improvements in the interests of the people of Gwynedd.
- Assess the roles required to deliver for our people effectively
- Look for opportunities to ensure that the demand for service is deviated.

Project 2 - Leaders' Development Programme

The Leaders' Development Programme Project will ensure that leaders within Gwynedd Council understand the principles of "Ffordd Gwynedd"; that they are aware of what they need to do in order to reiterate the "Ffordd Gwynedd" principles through all tiers of the establishment and that they are equipped to do so.

Leadership that highlights the importance of Ffordd Gwynedd and maintains the vision.

Project 3 - Engagement Strategy

The Engagement Strategy Project will ensure that there is appropriate support available to help service teams and members to improve the Council's engagement arrangements whilst ensuring that priority is given to those priority fields within the Strategic Plan.

Suitable engagement arrangements to ensure that we do the things that matter to the people of Gwynedd and where to prioritise our resources.

Project 4 - Implementing a Performance Framework

The Implementing a Performance Framework project will develop and install a new performance framework which will ensure that service teams measure what matters to the people of Gwynedd and will use those indicators to improve performance and that the reporting procedure will add value by

A performance framework that measures whether we meet the needs of the people of Gwynedd and offer them value for money.

holding services to account.

Project 5 - Review of opening hours

The Review of Opening Hours Project will engage with the people of Gwynedd to see whether there is demand for different opening hours and consider whether this can be realised within the financial constraints.

Service provision arrangements that create value for the customer.

Project 6 - Extending the use of self-service

The Extending the Use of Self-Service project will establish which fields we should be targeting to use Information Technology to extend the use of self-service in order to make it easier to access the services with consideration of the benefits and cost of doing so and realising the established business plan.

Project 7 - Change Management Arrangements

The Change Management Arrangements project will assess where there is a need to strengthen our change management arrangements and putting in place a programme to resolve this in order to achieve the necessary changes.

Project 8 - Information Technology Strategy

The Information Technology Strategy will create a strategy and work programme in order to realise that strategy, which will maximise the use of information technology to assist the Council's workforce to deliver for the people of Gwynedd in the context of the financial climate ahead.

Policies that support the achievement of customer needs rather than creating barriers.

Project 9 - The EDRMS Project will put a system in place which will reduce our dependency on paper and will save us time and costs.



Integrating public services - Thus far, the efforts to collaborate have had little impact. In order to respond to this, we will establish the following project -

Project 10 - Redefining the role and remit of the Gwynedd Local Services Board.

The Redefining the role and remit of the Gwynedd Local Services Board project will ensure that we undertake a review of the role and remit of the Local Services Board ensuring that its activities add value to the people of Gwynedd for the future.

Governance arrangements that make decisions on the basis of firm evidence of the effect on the people of Gwynedd.

The Governance Statement published by the Council in

Summer 2014 identifies several governance risks which need to be addressed, with the following identified as very high risks which need addressing -

The Council's Values - There is not much evidence that the Council's values are embedded as we would have wished amongst Council staff and members. Discussions with staff have highlighted that there are other factors which are more important than values. **Project 1 above will be a method of responding to this risk.**

The "Achievement" Framework - Lack of ownership of performance information and its use for improvement. There is a need to be clearer about what is management information and what is performance indicator. **Project 4 above will be a**

method of responding to this risk.

Engagement - The Council's engagement arrangements are not as good as they should be for the new climate that lies ahead. **Project 3 above will respond to this risk.**

Project 11 - Information Governance

As a result of recent failures, there is an element of evidence that we need to improve our information management arrangements. **Project no. 11 will be a method of doing this.**

Employment arrangements - No specific projects have been identified at present for this field; however, there are implications deriving from Project No. 1 which will mean that there will be work streams within that project to adapt our recruitment, appraisal and induction arrangements in line with what will be needed as part of that project.

Employment Arrangements that equip staff and reinforce behaviours to place the people of Gwynedd at the centre.



7 Resources

In terms of resources, the Council has already provided a resource to be able to achieve Project 1 and we have reiterated this by creating a Special Programme Leader post for a period of three years in order to ensure that we achieve the necessary changes.

Therefore, it is anticipated that it can be achieved to a specific level without the need for further funding in addition to what is already available; however, we cannot be certain that no other requirements will arise in the future.

The Council must consider any further needs that could arise in the future based on their merits and the financial situation at the time.

It is questionable whether the existing resource provided reflects the Council's ambition.

It is recommended that the existing resource is adequate to embed the principles in 21 service units by the end of 2018/19. With a further one-off investment of £150,000 this could be increased to 31.

8 How will we know if we have succeeded?

At the end of the day, the success of Ffordd Gwynedd will be a situation where individuals' experiences, when they come into contact with the Council will be positive ones that will meet their needs. In order for this to happen, we must have services which can

show that they respond to what is important by showing that they know what is important to the people of Gwynedd; that they have appropriate measures to show how well they respond to these matters and can show that they have arrangements in place to identify barriers and can respond in order to get rid of those barriers.

The aim is for every Service Unit in the Council to define clearly what needs they meet and the measures which prove how well they meet those needs (in line with the business model noted in section 2 above). The true success of this strategy will then be the assurances that those measures are in place and that we see those measures improving.

In order to give an element of assurance that service units within the Council work to these principles and follow working arrangements and behaviours which will allow this to improve for the future, it is intended to establish a Ffordd Gwynedd charter mark.

We will, therefore, be measuring the following as an indicator of success

- Percentage of business units within the Council which have received a Ffordd Gwynedd charter mark.
- Percentage of measures established when following the route of Project 1 which shows improvement.

Within a period of two years, we will undertake a formal review of progress against the objective.